

**Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees  
Wednesday, June 13, 2007  
Science Museum of Virginia**

**Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees Members Present**

Secretary L. Preston Bryant, Jr. Chair  
Secretary Robert S. Bloxom  
Sandy Liddy Bourne  
Margaret H. Davis  
William C. Dickinson  
Lou Giusto  
Thomas B. Graham  
Joseph H. Maroon, Executive Secretary

Senator Patricia S. Ticer, Vice Chair  
R. Brian Ball  
Nancy T. Bowles  
Senator R. Creigh Deeds  
Wendell P. Ennis  
Mary Bruce Glaize  
Albert C. Weed, II

**Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees Members Not Present**

Terri Cofer Beirne  
Bonnie Moorman  
Leah Fried Sedwick

Albert Essel  
L. Clifford Schroeder, Sr.

**Staff Present**

Nicole M. Rovner, Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources  
James Adams, Department of Game and Inland Fisheries  
Elizabeth Andrews, Office of the Attorney General  
Timothy J. Bishton, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Robins Buck, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
John R. Davy, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
David C. Dowling, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Rob Farrell, Virginia Department of Forestry  
Michael R. Fletcher, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Hank Hartz, Virginia Outdoors Foundation  
Bob Lee, Virginia Outdoors Foundation  
Wendy Musumeci, Department of Historic Resources  
Ashley Peace, Department of Historic Resources  
Sarah Richardson, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Kevin Schmidt, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
Thomas L. Smith, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Jeremy Stone, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Deb Van Duzee, Department of Game and Inland Fisheries  
Brad Williams, Virginia Department of Forestry

**Others Present**

Barbara Bodenstein, Elizabeth River Project  
Linda Crowe, The Nature Conservancy

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John Elliott, Town of Abingdon  
Tom Gilmore, Civil War Preservation Trust  
Charles Grymes, Prince William Conservation Alliance  
Dave Harless, Historic Hopewell Foundation  
Kim Hosen, Prince William Conservation Alliance  
Marjorie Jackson, Elizabeth River Project  
Joe Lerch, Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
John McBride, Merrimac Farm Project  
Jane McCullen, Historic Hopewell Foundation  
John Moore, Piedmont Environmental Council  
Mike Nardolilli, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust  
Elizabeth Obenshain, New River Land Trust  
Phil Sheridan, Meadowview  
Bob Smith, Historic Hopewell Foundation  
Brian van Eerden, The Nature Conservancy

### **Call to Order**

Secretary Bryant called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present.

Secretary Bryant said that land conservation was a particular emphasis of the Governor and is at the center of the Natural Resources agenda. He said that Governor Kaine has established a goal of conserving an additional 400,000 acres during his Administration. He noted that historically, the Commonwealth has conserved about 55,500 acres per year. Meeting the Governor's goal means a doubling of the efforts.

Secretary Bryant said there are several partners in this process, including DCR, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Historic Resources, and DGIF as well as our federal partners. There are also around thirty land trusts and partnerships.

The first annual Virginia United Land Trust Conference was held in May. More than 100 people from land trusts and state agencies were in attendance.

Secretary Bryant noted that Governor Kaine had proposed about \$20 million in the last budget for various land conservation purposes. Of that proposed amount, the General Assembly was able to appropriate about \$6.6 million.

### **Minutes of November 21, 2006**

MOTION: Senator Ticer moved that the minutes of the November 21, 2006 meeting of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees be approved as submitted.

SECOND: Mr. Dickinson

DISCUSSION: None

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VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

**Executive Secretary's Report**

Mr. Maroon gave the Executive Secretary's Report. A copy of his report is included as Attachment #1.

Mr. Maroon noted the following:

As noted by Secretary Bryant, Mr. Maroon said that the Governor's proposed budget had included a significant increase for land conservation. He reviewed specific budget recommendations that are outlined in the attached report.

Mr. Maroon highlighted three particular pieces of legislation. Copies of these bills were provided in member packets.

Senator Ticer sponsored SB942 regarding VLCF funding distribution. The House companion bill was HB2825 sponsored by Delegate Lee Ware. This bill changed the existing funding formula for the distribution of funds when certain thresholds are met. This would separate the forest and farmland category into separate categories if funding exceeds \$10 million annually.

The bill also ensures that wildlife interests are included in the statute with regard to open space. The bill also established a reversion clause for any funds transferred to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Unused funds at the end of each fiscal year would be returned to the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation for use in future grant rounds.

Senator Ticer said that the final legislation was progress as it recognizes that agriculture and forestry are separate issues.

Mr. Maroon said that SB1211 and HB2694 expands projects that can be financed by the Virginia Resources Authority related to land conservation and preservation.

SJR401 and the companion HJ693 continue a joint legislative study committee to study long term funding relating to conserving open spaces and farmland.

Mr. Maroon noted that a copy of the 2006 VLCF Annual Report was provided in member packets. Additional copies are available from DCR.

Mr. Maroon said that through the first four grant rounds, the VLCF has been able to award \$21.7 million to 69 projects. A total of \$57 million for 136 projects was requested.

Mr. Maroon said that the total amount of conserved land as of June 2006 was 3,445,455 acres, representing 13.6% of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Maroon referred to a map showing where the VLCF has funded projects in previous grant rounds. A copy of the map was provided in member packets and is available from DCR.

Mr. Maroon said that State law calls for fair distribution based on the following three criteria:

1. The importance of conserving land in all regions of the Commonwealth;
2. The importance of protecting specific properties that can benefit all Virginia citizens;
3. The importance of addressing the particular land conservation needs of areas of the state where Fund moneys are generated.

A member requested a review of projects by Congressional District. Ms. Richardson will provide that information to members via email.

Mr. Maroon noted that the Board had been active in the past year.

- In 2006, the Board met three times:
  - June 7 – grant manual and scoring criteria review and call for 30-day comment period; announcement of the Governor’s goal
  - August 9 – grant manual and scoring criteria approval; tax credit project timeline and process approval; approval of Nov. 15 through Jan. 16 grant round
  - November 30 – tax credit valuation criteria approval
- There were also two subcommittee meetings on the Land Preservation Tax Credit criteria chaired by Brian Ball
  - September 8 and October 3

## **Financial Report and Actions**

### *Financial Report*

Mr. Bishton gave the financial report. A copy of the financial report is available from DCR.

Total liabilities and equity are \$9,676,995.

Mr. Bishton reviewed the status of current projects. He reviewed the funding from all four grant rounds.

Mr. Ennis said that a previous annual report to the General Assembly and the Governor referenced some \$28 million allocated to the VLCF in 2000-2005. He noted that approximately \$27 million was spent. However he noted that the report also referenced reverting funds during budget cutting years.

Mr. Bishton said that the funds do not revert automatically. He said that in times when there are budget concerns, the money that is not obligated could be targeted to revert back to the general budget. This is not a standard practice.

Mr. Maroon noted that there was \$429,000 in unallocated interest and that DCR was recommending that \$300,000 of this be added to the current grant round.

*Approval of Revised Funding Plan*

Mr. Dowling reviewed the Revised Funding Summary Plan for the December 2006 Grant Round. A copy of the summary is available from DCR.

Mr. Dowling noted that the total approved in 2006 for the current grant round was \$6,655,482.

Mr. Dowling said that the requested action was to add \$500,000 to the current grant round as a result of HB1650 for Fiscal Year 2007 as well as an additional \$500,000 for Fiscal Year 2008.

Mr. Dowling said DCR would also like to add the unallocated principal balance of \$80,490.83 to the current grant round along with \$300,000 in interest.

MOTION: Mr. Ennis moved that the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees approve the financial report and the revised funding summary plan for the December 2006 grant round as presented by staff.

SECOND: Senator Ticer

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

*Board Approval of DCR Expenses for FY 2009*

Mr. Maroon presented the Administrative Expenses Budget Request

1. Conservation Tracking and Targeting Activities (ongoing) \$200,000
  - Conservation Lands Website Development
    - Comprehensive Inventory of conserved lands in the Commonwealth.
    - Supports conservation lands database maintenance and enhancement and the distribution of land conservation database information.
    - Serves as basis for annual reporting on VLCF efforts, Chesapeake Bay Agreement goals and monthly progress towards Governor's goal.

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- Virginia Conservation Lands Needs Assessment
  - Update of DCR statewide database that identifies priority conservation lands including ecologically important lands, open space and trails, historic, agricultural and forests.
  - Provision of conservation information products for use by the land trust community and local governments

(These two data management efforts continue to function as a strategic planning and performance measurement tool for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and serves as resource for decision makers and the land conservation community. The VLCF funds requested will serve as a match to other state, federal and private funds.)

2. Assistance for Grant Implementation Expenses (Postage, Travel, Printing, etc.)  
\$2,000

3. Enhanced VLCF Information Materials (new) \$20,000  
 - VLCF Funded Project Signs  
 - Printed Materials/Brochure

Total Requested Funds \$222,000

Notes: Up to \$250,000 per year in interest is allowed to be utilized for administrative expenses.

The VLCF board previously authorized \$198,700 in FY 2007 and \$182,000 in FY 2008.

Mr. Dickinson asked about the possibility of signage for previously approved projects.

Mr. Maroon said that the proposal is to require signage for grant projects from this point forward, and to offer it to past grant projects. There is no design for the signage at this point.

Ms. Bourne asked if the postage took into account the recent rate increase.

Mr. Maroon said that DCR supplements a lot of activity for the VLCF, including postage.

Secretary Bryant said the sign design would be available for Board review.

Mr. Weed expressed a concern about future funding and for outreach for local programs.

Secretary Bryant said that several months ago he began a discussion regarding a special initiative for Central and Southern Virginia to identify potential landowners in those parts for education purposes. He said efforts are also being made to reach the professional community including realtors, CPAs and financial planners.

Mr. Maroon said that the administrative request did not represent the entire effort. He said this represented the amount of funding available through the VLCF for this effort.

MOTION: Senator Ticer moved that the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation approve the Administrative Expenses Budget Request as presented by staff.

SECOND: Mr. Graham.

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

### **Review of Grant Criteria**

Secretary Bryant called on Sarah Richardson to give a review of the grant criteria.

Ms. Richardson noted that members were provided a copy of the 2006 Grant Program Manual in their packets. That Grant Manual is also available on the DCR website.

Ms. Richardson presented the following:

#### **VLCF Grant Criteria**

- Each of the statutory categories is scored with different criteria.
  - Farms and Forests are each scored with different criteria, so there are five different scoring sheets.
- In each category, a project can receive up to 80 points.
- 21 points are available for four additional criteria that apply to all categories, for a total of 101 points.

#### **VLCF Interagency Task Force**

- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Department of Conservation and Recreation
  - Division of Planning and Recreation Resources
  - Division of Natural Heritage
- Department of Forestry
- Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Department of Historic Resources
- Virginia Outdoors Foundation (advisory role)

#### **VLCF Grant Criteria**

Additional criteria that apply to all categories:

1. Project satisfies conservation needs identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan and/or local comprehensive plan: **up to 3 points.**
2. Project protects water quality with riparian buffers at least 35 feet wide: **up to 4 points.**
3. Degree to which project has value in other specified categories or for wildlife: **up to 11 points.**
4. Degree to which the property has public or visual access: **up to 3 points.**

#### **Open Spaces and Parks Category**

1. Protection or acquisition of greenways, blueways, viewsheds, abandoned rail corridors and open space areas: **up to 10 points.**
2. Acquisition of land or easements that provided increased protection and/or public access to state waters: **up to 15 points.**
3. Addresses a need identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan: **up to 10 points.**
4. Supports local comprehensive plans for parks, open space, and recreation: **up to 8 points.**
5. Availability of land for public use: **up to 10 points.**
6. Supports federal Wild and Scenic Rivers, American Heritage Rivers, state Scenic Rivers, Scenic Roads or Byways: **up to 5 points.**
7. Demonstrates partnerships to enhance development of parks, open space, and greenways in rapidly developing areas: **up to 6 points.**
8. Acquires or protects land next to existing park systems: **up to 9 points.**
9. Conserves land in rapidly developing and threatened areas or protects conservation corridors: **up to 7 points.**

#### **Natural Areas Category**

1. Natural Heritage biodiversity rank, based on global and state rarity and on number and condition of natural heritage resources: **up to 20 points.**
2. Adequate size and condition of the tract to protect and manage resources: **up to 15 points.**
3. Proximity to other conservation lands, to expand protection of resources: **up to 15 points.**
4. Applicants' capability to manage and protect the site: **up to 10 points.**

5. Extent to which the site supports exemplary natural communities not well protected in Virginia: **up to 10 points.**

6. Number and quality of element occurrences: **up to 10 points.**

**Historic Areas Category**

1. Protection of an area that contains buildings or places that are (a) listed on the Va. Landmarks Register or certified as eligible for listing; (b) contributing to or providing a buffer for listed resources; or (c) a Civil War Battlefield listed as Class A or B, Priority I or II by Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report: **up to 40 points.**
2. Identifiable threat to the resource or compelling need for immediate protection: **up to 10 points.**
3. Applicant demonstrates capacity to ensure appropriate management and provide maximum public benefits: **up to 10 points.**
4. Complements or enhances other cultural or historic resources, or represents a unique opportunity within the geographical area: **up to 5 points.**
5. Protection furthers other public interests such as education, research, heritage tourism, or orderly community development: **up to 5 points.**
6. Protection of the resource is part of a broader resource management plan: **up to 5 points.**
7. Demonstrated public support for protection of the resource: **up to 5 points.**

**Agricultural Lands Category**

1. Soil Productivity and Land Quality – prime, unique, or locally important farmland: **up to 20 points.**
2. Land Quality – high-value specialty crops, prime farmland or statewide or locally important farmland: **up to 20 points.**
3. Land Use – currently being farmed; near other preserved lands; threat from development; use of BMPs; support of local comprehensive plan; environmental benefits: **up to 40 points.**

**Forest Lands Category**

1. High potential for land use changes that threaten forestlands: **up to 15 points.**
2. Protects a significant watershed, impaired stream, or public reservoir: **up to 15 points.**

3. Purchase or easement is offered at a price below market value: **up to 10 points.**
4. Property will be managed with a Forest Stewardship Plan: **up to 10 points.**
5. Adjacent to other conserved lands: **up to 10 points.**
6. Suitable for long-term forest research, landowner demonstrations, or conservation education: **up to 10 points.**
7. Within an area identified as important by local comprehensive plan: **up to 5 points.**
8. Potential to protect or restore threatened fauna or flora or their habitat; can help restore native trees; protects historic or archaeological site: **up to 5 points.**

Mr. Dickinson asked if the criteria were set out by statute or if the Board established them.

Ms. Richardson said the categories are set by statute but that the scoring criteria within the categories are Board approved.

Mr. Dickinson clarified that the Board had the ability to change the weighting of the scores in each category.

Mr. Maroon said that had been done in the past.

Secretary Bryant said that the current round of applications were submitted under the last set of Board approved criteria and suggested that discussion regarding changing the criteria should be held off until after this current grant round.

Ms. Bourne asked how many reviewers there were for each application.

Ms. Richardson said that the number of reviewers varies with the category.

Ms. Bourne asked if there was an overseer or supervisory role to see if there is disparity in the review assessment or other control to limit human error.

Ms. Richardson said that DCR does quality control and tries to keep track of each score so that all the scores are shown.

Mr. Maroon said the management of the Interagency Task Force is done by DCR.

Ms. Bourne asked if the reviewers were provided training on how to review each application.

Ms. Richardson said that the Task Force reviews the criteria. She said that each of the people scoring the applications are experts in their field working with their respective agencies. Further, the full Task Force has final review of the projects.

Mr. Dowling said that there has been continuity across the five grant rounds. He noted that at least one of the reviewers at each agency has been present through the full development of the criteria.

Mr. Ennis noted that the VLCF was a small part of what the agency handled. He asked how many divisions and employees DCR had.

Mr. Maroon said that DCR has approximately 520 staff. DCR is responsible for state parks, natural preserves, soil and water conservation, including stormwater, dam safety and floodplain management, and the oversight of the Chesapeake Bay Act at the locality level. DCR provides staff for 11 Boards.

### **Grant Overview**

Ms. Richardson gave an overview of the current grant round.

#### **VLCF 2007 Grant Overview**

The grant round opened Nov. 15, 2006, and closed Jan. 15, 2007.

Announcements were sent to every county or city and all land trusts and conservation organizations in Virginia.

More than 50 prospective applicants attended a grant workshop in Charlottesville held on Dec. 4, 2006.

31 applications were received:

- 10 in Open Spaces and Parks
- 4 in Natural Areas
- 12 in Historic Areas
- 5 in Farmlands and Forest

Many more eligible projects were received than the limited VLCF allocation could fund.

The Interagency task force met three times to discuss the projects.

- Once in February and twice in April

Total amount of funding available in this grant round is \$6,217,843.

Total amount of funding requested was more than \$24 million, with total projects costs over \$43 million.

Requests were for four times as much funding as VLCF has available.

- If all projects could have been funded, they would have helped to protect 13,128 acres.

15 projects are recommended for funding

- These 15 will help protect 11,539 acres.
- Match for recommended projects will be \$19,263,322.

12 of the recommended projects will provide public access and use.

- 9 of the projects, with 10,008 acres, will offer full public access.
- 3 of the projects, with 733 acres, will offer limited public access.

3 projects are recommended in the Open Spaces and Parks category.

- One of these can be funded partly from the Open Spaces and Parks category, and partly from the Natural Areas category.
- Funding for two of the recommended projects will be less than requested, with the concurrence of the applicants.

4 projects are recommended in the Natural Areas category.

- All projects in this category can be fully funded.
- Remaining funding from this category can also be used for a project in the Open Spaces category that qualifies under the Natural Areas criteria.

4 projects are recommended in the Historic Areas category.

- One of the projects can be funded from the Farmlands and Forest category, since it is a working farm.
  - Allows the Historic Areas funding to extend further down the list of projects.
- Funding for one of the recommended projects will be less than requested, with the concurrence of the applicant.

5 projects are recommended in the Farmlands and Forest category.

- Funding for the three Forest projects will be less than requested, with the concurrence of the applicants.
- Only one application for Farmland funding was received, so a project from the Historic Areas category can be funded from the Farmlands category.
  - Both Farmlands projects can be fully funded.

Mr. Weed said that the fact that 90% of the total acreage was protected suggested these were the wrong measures. He said that there should be another way to measure rather than just acreage.

Senator Ticer said that the representatives from Northern Virginia agree because of the value of the land.

Secretary Bryant said that the challenge always faced is getting the best value for the amount of funding available.

At this time the Board recessed for lunch.

### **Presentation of Grant Projects for Authorization**

#### *Open Spaces and Parks Category*

Mr. Davy presented the following projects in the Open Spaces and Parks Category:

**Elizabeth River Project – Paradise Creek Nature Park, Phase II:** This project will acquire the remaining 15.6 acres of the Peck property for creation of the 40-acre Nature Park. The first 24 acres of the Peck property was acquired with funding assistance from the VLCF. The parcel is one of the last remaining tracts of undeveloped forest of any size in private hands on the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River. The project is specifically recommended in the Draft 2007 Virginia Outdoors Plan as a vital link in regional wildlife corridors and water trails. The project will aid in restoration of 10 acres of tidal wetlands. **Total Project Cost:** \$925,000. Cash match of \$500,000 from Virginia Port Authority. **VLCF Request:** \$425,000. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$300,000. This project will provide full public access.

**Prince William Conservation Alliance – Merrimac Farm:** This project will provide an area for passive recreation, environmental education, enjoyment of diverse wildlife, fishing and possible continued use of the land for hunting on a 302-acre farm located near Quantico Marine Base. The property, which is registered with the National Registry of Historic Sites 44-PW-0066, has a 115-acre floodplain parallel to Cedar Run that is a designated USCOE jurisdictional wetland. The site contains a French cemetery dating back to the 1800s, and provides a buffer for one mile along the northern border of Cedar Run with over 100 acres of contiguous forested wetlands adjacent to Cedar Run, which is listed on the 303(d) list. **Total Project Cost:** \$3,100,000. Cash match of \$1,500,000 from Quantico Marine Corps Base (projected) and \$100,000 from the Prince William Conservation Alliance. **VLCF Request:** \$1,500,00. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$820,773. This project will provide full public access.

**Department of Game & Inland Fisheries – Bullpasture River (Lockridge):** The acquisition of 177.62 acres located at the head of Bullpasture River Gorge adjacent to the Highland Wildlife Management Area in Highland County. The property contains a stretch of river designated as a Stream Conservation Unit by DCR-NH and as a

threatened and endangered species water by DGIF. The property is located in one of the most significant cave and karst regions in the Commonwealth. Protection of the property will expand public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, bird watching and nature observation, provide protection for the James spiny mussel, and provide buffer for one of the state's most pristine headwater river systems. DGIF will manage the property in conjunction with the Highland Wildlife Management Area. **Total Project Cost:** \$536,200. No match is required, as applicant is a state agency. **VLCF Request:** \$536,200. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$536,200 (\$246,649 from the Open Space category and \$289,551 from the Natural Areas category for a total of \$536,200). This project will provide full public access.

#### *Natural Area Protection Category*

Mr. Smith presented the recommended projects in the Natural Area Protection Category:

The Nature Conservancy – **Gallohan-Surgenor Cave System:** A proposal for the fee simple purchase by The Nature Conservancy of two parcels totaling 330 acres on the Powell River, Lee County. Two globally significant cave systems and 2 miles of river frontage the site supports 33 rare species and community mapped locations. **Total Project Cost:** \$715,000. VLCF funds will be matched with a \$400,000 USF&WS grant. **VLCF Request:** \$315,000. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$315,000. This project will provide limited public access.

The Nature Conservancy – **Blackwater River – Old Growth:** A proposal for the fee simple acquisition by Isle of Wight County with TNC holding an easement on 500 acres adjacent to TNC's Blackwater Preserve, Isle of Wight County. Site supports a bald cypress-tupelo swamp, and three rare animals are documented on the adjacent TNC property. **Total Project Cost:** \$900,000. VLCF funds will be matched with \$500,000 Isle of Wight County Open Space Fund. **VLCF request:** \$400,000. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$400,000. This project will provide full public access.

New River Land Trust – **Sweet Spring Hollow:** A proposal for the purchase of an easement by the New River Land Trust on 232 acres in Montgomery County. Site supports a globally rare dolomite woodland and wetland communities and 13 mapped locations of rare plant and animal species. **Total Project Cost:** \$451,900. VLCF funds will be matched with a \$225,950 USF&WS Grant or Park and NA bond funds. **VLCF Request:** \$225,950. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$225,950. This easement project will provide limited public access.

The Nature Conservancy - **Lower Blackwater:** A proposal for the purchase of a 415 acre conservation easement by The Nature Conservancy on the Blackwater River, Southampton County that is part of a 718 acre tract. The site is part of a high priority forested core, intersects two B2 sites, contains bald eagle nest, and is part of an unprotected stream-head pocosin (rare peatland). **Total Project Cost:** \$416,000. VLCF funds will be matched with \$208,000 existing NAWCA funds. **VLCF request:** \$208,000. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$208,000. This easement project will provide limited public access.

*Historic Area Preservation*

Ms. Musumeci presented the recommendations in the Historic Area Preservation category:

New River Land Trust – Ingles Ferry Farm: The grant request is for the purchase of an easement on the 314 acres of the Ingles Ferry Farm near Radford in Pulaski County, to protect the farm house, ferry site, active farmlands and viewsheds along the New River. The owners plan to open the site to the public once a year, and make the property available for educational visits and research. **Total Project Cost**: \$567,635. Match is \$283,817.50 from landowner's donation of 50% of easement value. **VLCF Request**: \$283,817.50. **Recommended Grant Amount**: \$283,817.50 from Farm and Forestlands category. This project will provide some limited public access.

Piedmont Environmental Council – Montpelier: Home of James Madison: The request is for purchase of an easement on 700 acres of forested and open-space land surrounding the historic core of James Madison's Montpelier estate, Orange County. Historic resources include the home of George Gilmore, an African-American slave owned by the Madison family and emancipated after the Civil War, as well as important archeological and historical resources associated with Civil War operations. The National Trust and the Montpelier Foundation plan to develop an interpretive trail and active recreation opportunities for the visiting public. **Total Project Cost**: \$1,996,200. Match is \$1,250,000 in cash from Piedmont Environmental Council and \$46,200 from other sources (privately raised funds). **VLCF Request**: \$700,000. **Recommended Grant Amount**: \$700,000. This project will provide full public access.

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation – Cooley Farm: The grant request is for the acquisition of 189 acres of the Cooley Farm in Warren County. Ranked as a Class A property by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, the Cooley Farm is associated with the battle of Cedar Creek. Located near the center of the designated Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, the Cooley Farm is the largest remaining parcel of the battle unprotected. The property is currently under contract to the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Association, who plan to protect and interpret the site in coordination with the National Park Service. **Total Project Cost**: \$2,146,300. Match is \$1,073,150 in cash. **VLCF Request**: \$1,065,000. **Recommended Grant Amount**: \$539,512. This project will provide full public access.

Town of Abingdon – Historic Dunn's Meadow "Retirement" Residence & Property: The grant request is for the acquisition of 9 acres of the historic Dunn's Meadow residence and property in the town of Abingdon. Historic resources on the property include an archeological site identified as a Revolutionary War encampment, as well as the "Retirement," a brick residence of the same period. The property is also associated with the Overmountain Victory Trail Head and National Historic Trail. The Town of Abingdon plans to provide maximum public access to the property for educational, recreational, and interpretive uses. **Total Project Cost**: \$1,000,000. Match is \$795,000 in cash from uncommitted grant funding and \$5,000 from First Bank & Trust. **VLCF**

**Request:** \$200,000. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$200,000. This project will provide full public access.

*Farmland and Forest Preservation Category*

Mr. Farrell presented the Forest Preservation Category recommendations

Virginia Department of Forestry – **Brumley Mountain:** A grant has been requested to assist in purchasing the remaining two-thirds of the Brumley Mountain Property currently owned by The Nature Conservancy, for which a previous VLCF grant was awarded. This 4,800 acre property lies between two DGIF WMA's. The property protects a key intact forest within the Clinch Mountain Complex in Washington County. This area is a migratory stop for rare Cerulean warblers as well as many raptor species. It includes a series of unusual rock crevices called the Great Channels. Plans are in place for the Great Channels to become part of a 708-acre Natural Area managed by DCR. The DOF currently has no state forest in southwest Virginia. **Total Project Cost:** \$2,630,000. No match is required, as applicant is a state agency. **VLCF Request:** \$2,630,000 (reduced by DOF to \$1,030,000 since the agency received funding for Brumley Mountain in the 2007 Appropriations Act). **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$1,030,000. This project will provide full public access.

Virginia Department of Forestry – **Big Woods:** The DOF has requested VLCF grant funding for the acquisition of the Big Wood property in Sussex County, currently owned by The Nature Conservancy. Big Woods would be the first state forest in southeastern Virginia. The project provides the opportunity to conserve a disappearing feature of Virginia's coastal landscape – large, contiguous blocks of timberland. In addition, the property provides forests that will assist in the recovery efforts of the federally listed threatened and endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker, found on the adjacent conserved property. Big Woods protects the water supply for the Norfolk area, provides flood abatement to the Nottoway and Blackwater watersheds, and provides nearly 5,000 acres of working forest. **Total Project Cost:** \$8,315,000. No match required, as applicant is a state agency. **VLCF Request:** \$8,315,000. (Note: application has been made to the Forest Legacy Program for \$900,000 in funding for this project; this amount is currently part of the President's request to Congress for appropriation.) **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$300,000. This project will provide full public access.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation – **Charlton Hill Conservation Easement:** A grant request has been made to purchase a conservation easement to protect 89 acres of hardwood forest on the shoreline of Piscataway Creek, an impaired stream and a tributary to the Rappahannock River, in Essex County. The project protects habitat for 41 species of fish, Blue Crab, and a variety of waterfowl. Waterfront properties in this area are sought after for residential use. This project will restrict development rights under a conservation easement to VOF and maintain the current wildlife and water quality benefits. **Total Project Cost:** \$1,217,830. Match will be provided by a bargain sale from the landowner, VOF through the Open Space Preservation Trust Fund, TNC through the Virginia Aquatic Resources Trust Fund, and a donated easement through US Fish and Wildlife Service. **VLCF Request:** \$236,040. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$108,590.

Mr. Schmidt presented the Farmland Preservation Category recommendations

The Potomac Conservancy – Marlboro Angus: The Snapp Farm: A proposal for the Snapp Farm, a 151-acre working farm on Cedar Creek near Marlboro in Frederick County, was re-submitted. The Snapp Farm raises Angus beef cattle and replacement heifers on this property, and the family owns or leases several other pieces of land in the area, including a parcel adjacent to the easement. Mr. Snapp is actively engaged in conservation projects on his farm and uses streambank fencing, off-stream watering, and rotational grazing. Purchase of a conservation easement on this property will protect vital farmland in a rapidly developing region, protect riparian land, and help to continue a strong agricultural tradition in Frederick County. **Total Project Cost:** \$564,100. Match is more than \$300,000 committed from the Federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). **VLCF request:** \$250,000. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$250,000.

New River Land Trust – Ingles Ferry Farm: The grant request is for the purchase of an easement on the 314 acres of the Ingles Ferry Farm near Radford in Pulaski County, to protect the farm house, ferry site, active farmlands and viewsheds along the New River. The owners plan to open the site to the public once a year, and make the property available for educational visits and research. **Total Project Cost:** \$567,635. Match is \$283,817.50 from landowner's donation of 50% of easement value. **VLCF Request:** \$283,817.50. **Recommended Grant Amount:** \$283,817.50 from Farm and Forestlands category. This project will provide some limited public access.

Ms. Bourne asked if there was already a conservation easement on Brumley Mountain.

Mr. Maroon said that The Nature Conservancy bought the land to preserve it while state funds are identified for the purchase.

Secretary Bloxom said this land was held by TNC with the understanding that the State would acquire it.

Ms. Bourne expressed a concern about the state purchase of land that already is owned by The Nature Conservancy.

Mr. Farrell said that if the State does not purchase the property, TNC will need to sell it.

Mr. van Eerden from TNC said that time was of the essence in this purchase. He said that the intent of TNC was to hold the land until such time as the State could purchase the property. He said that one of the reasons not to put the easement on the property immediately was that it would affect the appraised value of the property.

*Public Comment from Grant Applicants*

Secretary Bryant called for public comment from grant applicants.

Mr. Mike Nardolilli of the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust addressed the Powhatan Springs application which was not recommended for funding. He noted that he had mailed information packets to Board members regarding this project, which would be part of a 110-acre greenway linking a series of parks in Arlington County.

Mr. Nardolilli said that he believed mistakes were made in the scoring of the Powhatan Springs application and that there should have been an additional 26 points awarded to the application. He reviewed the specific categories where he thought scoring was incorrect.

Mr. Nardolilli said he disagreed with the comments that funds were not intended to be distributed based on a Congressional District basis. He noted that Board members were appointed based on Congressional District and that the Annual Report of the VLCF shows projects by Congressional District.

Mr. Nardolilli noted that of \$23.5 million awarded, no funds were awarded to the Eighth Congressional District.

Secretary Bryant thanked Mr. Nardolilli for the comments and noted that Board members had reviewed the materials provided. He called on Mr. Davy to address the scoring concerns.

Mr. Davy said that the job of scoring the applications was difficult. He said that projects must be reviewed to see if they are consistent with the Virginia Outdoors Plan. He noted that only one project submitted received a 10 pt. score in that regard.

Senator Deeds said that he was concerned about the need for more recreation areas. He asked if consideration was given as to how many people will take advantage of the project area.

Mr. Davy said that when the regions of the state are considered, staff also considers public access.

Mr. Weed asked if the Board had the authority to change the scoring on a particular project.

Secretary Bryant noted that, yes the Board had that authority. He also noted that two other projects that were not being recommended scored higher than Powhatan Springs.

Ms. Bourne said that she had visited the site. She noted that the greenway and other portions were used by school systems and had active recreational use. She noted that there was a perennial stream at the back of the property.

Mr. Ennis noted that staff had worked diligently to develop the criteria. He said that Northern Virginia had always been a challenge because of property expense. He noted that several projects were back for consideration for the second or third time.

Mr. Graham asked what would happen if \$250,000 was shifted from the Bullpasture project.

Secretary Bryant said that the Board would be overlooking two projects that scored higher than Powhatan Springs.

Mr. Giusto said that it was not the obligation of the Board to micromanage the staff. He said that, unless there were mathematical errors, the Board needed to go with the scoring as presented.

Senator Ticer said that while there had been an inequity over the years that the Board had created the rigidity of the point system. She said that if a solution can not be found that the Board needs to reconsider the criteria in the future.

Mr. Weed said that the Board needed to make a decision based on staff recommendations.

Ms. Jane McCullen spoke on behalf of the Historic Hopewell Foundation.

Ms. McCullen said that Weston Manor in Hopewell is under a direct threat from development. She said that there is a possibility of condos being developed within 150 ft. of the property.

She noted that the property is on the blueway and greenway for the Appomattox River.

Secretary Bryant asked Ms. McCullen which areas she thought were underscored.

Ms. McCullen said that additional points could be gained under the threat category, the realistic plans and the preservation of the resource.

Ms. Musumeci said that when the application was reviewed, the Task Force looked at project worthiness, but also looked at the actual application. She said that some areas didn't score as highly because there were no answers to specific questions.

Secretary Bryant closed the public comment period.

### **Board Discussion and Determination Grant Awards**

MOTION: Mr. Graham moved that the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation approve the recommended projects as presented by staff.

SECOND: Mr. Ball

DISCUSSION: Ms. Bourne moved to amend the motion to include the Powhatan Springs project in the staff recommendations list. Mr. Weed seconded.

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Secretary Bryant called for discussion regarding the amendment. He noted that there were two projects that scored higher and suggested they be opened for discussion as well.

Mr. Graham noted that there is a requirement to have the matching funds. He asked how that would be rectified.

Secretary Bryant said that the motion was to include the project with no direction as to how funds would be distributed.

Mr. Ennis asked about the verbal reduction in the request from \$500,000 to \$226,000.

Mr. Maroon said that when staff and the Task Force make a recommendation of less than the grant request this is discussed with the applicant to see if the project would still be viable.

Mr. Graham asked if funds could come from another category.

Secretary Bryant said that the Board had to work within the parameters set out by statute and that funds could not be moved between categories.

Ms. Davis asked if a special committee could address the issue.

Mr. Ball said that it would be helpful to have a committee to see if there are other funds that might be available or to consider how the General Assembly might be approached in terms of funding.

Secretary noted that would not address the motion at hand.

Secretary Bloxom said that he believed the Task Force had been as objective as they could and that he would vote to deny the amendment and move forward with the original motion.

Secretary Bryant called for the vote on the amendment to the motion.

Aye: Bourne, Dickinson, Ticer, Weed, Bowles

Nay: Ennis, Ball, Deeds, Bloxom, Giusto, Glaize, Davis

The amendment to the motion failed.

Ms. Glaize said that there should be additional action to have a subcommittee address the scoring issues.

Secretary Bryant said that was not a part of the current motion.

Ms. Davis moved to amend the motion to say that the list of recommended projects should be advanced and that a special subcommittee be established to look into specific projects such as Powhatan Springs.

Secretary Bryant said these should be addressed as separate motions. Ms. Davis agreed to withdraw the amendment.

VOTE: Motion to approve projects as presented carried.

MOTION: Senator Deeds moved that Secretary Bryant appoint a subcommittee to examine ways to increase financing in the next Session of the General Assembly and to reconsider the scoring criteria.

SECOND: Ms. Glaize

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Discussion of Possible Revisions to the VLCF Scoring Criteria**

Ms. Rovner said that there is a need to consider the amount of public access provided in VLCF grant projects. She noted that for most of the projects, public access is allowed.

She said one of the issues discussed had been whether there should be a stronger emphasis on public access. She noted that Board discussion had indicated that to be a preference.

Also discussed and endorsed by Board consensus was signage at project sites.

Ms. Rovner noted that the Annual Report contained a great deal of useful information, but that staff is considering that a more marketable summary piece might be useful.

Mr. Maroon noted that the funding request approved by the Board would be used for the purposes of signage or marketing materials.

Ms. Rovner said that while staff wanted to make the General Assembly aware of the projects before the Board, that it was not the intent to politicize the process. The thought was to suggest that applicants provide letters of support from public officials. However this would not be a requirement.

### **Land Preservation Tax Credit Update**

Mr. Stone gave the following update regarding the Land Preservation Tax Credit Program.

- Land Preservation Tax Credit Valuation Criteria were adopted by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) Board on November 21, 2006.
- Procedural guidelines were reviewed with the Board in November and adopted by the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), on December 22, 2006.
- The Department of Taxation's application for the Land Preservation Tax Credit (LPC) and instructions were drafted by DCR in partnership with the Department of Taxation (TAX) with an effective date of January 1, 2007.
- The DCR Land Conservation Analyst was hired to develop review procedures, evaluate applications, and report findings to the Director, on February 12, 2007.
- A Memorandum of Agreement was entered into by DCR and TAX as to the responsibilities of each in the LPC program, the allocation of the fee generated by the transfer of LPC, and the sharing of information to ensure the timely and appropriate issuance of LPC.
- The procedural manual and forms for receipt and review of LPC applications and the LPC pre-filing applications were completed (version 1) by DCR staff in February and March of 2007.
- An electronic database for the tracking and reporting of LPC applications claiming a credit of \$1 million or more and for all applications donating conservation easements regardless of the credit value claimed was created by DCR staff in February and March of 2007.
- New web pages explaining the LPC and DCR application review procedures were designed by DCR staff in April and May of 2007.
- Questions posed by land trusts, potential applicants, and those counseling potential applicants have been answered and incorporated into a "Frequently Asked Questions" document for publication on the DCR LPC website on an ongoing basis. The FAQ document and web page will be released soon and will be regularly updated.
- One LPC pre-filing review application has been received by DCR staff; DCR staff began the review of this pre-filing application on June 8, 2007.

Mr. Dowling noted that copies of the forms developed with the Department of Taxation were included in member packets.

### **Other Land Conservation Related Projects**

Ms. Richardson referenced model conservation easement language. A copy of this model language was provided to members and is available from DCR.

Mr. Maroon said that while the intent is to increase the number of acres preserved that there is also a concern about the quality of easements.

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Mr. Maroon said the intent of the model language was for the Commonwealth to provide a cafeteria style approach with language that would inform the landowner and empower groups working with individuals see if they could increase the value of conservation easements.

Ms. Richardson said this model language was put together by another interagency task force. She noted that the document provided was a rough draft.

Mr. Maroon asked that members submit comments to Ms. Richardson.

Ms. Richardson said that in December, DCR held a workshop for Natural Resources agencies regarding land conservation. In addition, a workshop was held for DCR staff interested in land conservation but who do not work in that area.

Ms. Richardson said that the goal is to spread the message of land conservation throughout DCR and other state agencies.

DCR's Division of Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance put together a land conservation workshop aimed at local governments, including local officials.

In March, Ms. Richardson spoke to a regional meeting of Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Southern and Southeastern Virginia.

There were two land conservation workshops at the annual Environment Virginia Conference in April.

Working with Virginia's United Land Trusts, DCR held the first Land Trust Conference in early June.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Adams from DGIF thanked the Board for the approval of the DGIF related projects.

There was no additional public comment.

### **Other Business**

Secretary Bryant said that because of Board actions, an additional 11-12,000 acres of land were being preserved.

Mr. Dickinson noted that a study commissioned by the General Assembly is looking at future parkland in Northern Virginia. He thanked Mr. Maroon for his support and assistance.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

L. Preston Bryant, Jr.  
Chairman

Joseph H. Maroon  
Executive Secretary

Attachment #1

**Virginia Land Conservation Foundation**

**June 14, 2007**

**Executive Secretary's Report**

**Budget Status Report**

- The Governor's budget proposal included a significant increase to land conservation.
- Governor Kaine's Budget, introduced on December 15, 2006, included over \$20 Million [a total of \$19,749,040 (FY07) and \$350,000 (FY08)]. This would have been among the largest investments in land conservation by the Commonwealth.
- It included the following:
  - \$13,700,000 in the first year from the general fund for matching grants from the Virginia Land Conservation Fund to promote natural area protection, open spaces and parks, farmlands and forest preservation, and historic area preservation. This would have been in addition to the \$2.5 M already in the VLCF base budget for each year of the biennium.
  - \$5,000,000 in FY 2007 to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for the establishment of a state fund to match local government purchase of development rights program funds for the preservation of working farms and forest lands.
  - \$950,000 in FY 2007 for operating support for the Virginia Outdoors Foundation to provide assistance to landowners with placing property under conservation easements.
  - \$151,920 and two positions in FY 2008 to the Department of Historic Resources for administration of the Historic Easement Program.
  - Funding for two positions was also provided to support the Department of Conservation and Recreation's promotion and administration of land conservation programs. In the second year of the biennium (beginning July 1, 2007), one position is to be paid for out of fees related to the land preservation tax credit program.
- In the final budget, the \$20,099,040 was reduced to \$6,649,040 (\$5,099,040 – FY07 and \$1,550,000 – FY08):
  - The General Assembly did approve the staffing and operating support as requested by the Governor for VOF, DHR and DCR to increase staff capacity related to land conservation.
  - The General Assembly did slightly reduce the amount of funds for the VDACS PDR program from \$5 M to \$4.25 M (\$3,550,000 in the first year and \$700,000 the second year)
  - However, the biggest cut was made to the additional VLCF funding which went from \$13.7 M to \$1 M (\$500,000 in the first year and \$500,000 the second year from the general fund). Given this small addition, we have added the \$1 M to those funds you will be awarding today. We will need your approval later on the agenda.

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## Legislative Actions

### **SB942 (Senator Ticer) and HB2825 (Delegate Lee Ware) - VLCF Fund Disbursements**

- Identical bills were introduced in each house.
- The Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Department of Forestry with assistance from the Secretary of Natural Resources' office crafted this legislation with input from several stakeholders in the last few weeks leading up to the opening of the Session in early January.
- The bills amended §10.1-1020 of the Code of Virginia to change the existing funding formula and procedures that govern the matching grants made to conserve lands by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation.
- Specifically, the bills accomplished three things:
  - In years when \$10 M or more are deposited into the Fund, the forest and farmland categories will be separated into distinct funding categories; otherwise they will continue to be joined together in the same category. The request for separate categories was made by the Board of Forestry.
  - Specifically added “wildlife interests” to the open space category – This will make explicit the inclusion of lands related to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching in the grant category associated with open spaces and parks.
  - Established a reversion clause for unused funds distributed to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation – The legislation requires the return of any unused funds originating from the VLCF fund that remain in the Virginia Outdoors Foundation’s Open Space Preservation Trust Fund at the end of each fiscal year. The returned funds will be added to future grant rounds of the VLCF.
- The legislation was developed with the input and support of the following stakeholders:

Virginia Outdoors Foundation	Virginia Farm Bureau
Virginia Agribusiness Council	Virginia Forestry Association
Virginia Forever	Piedmont Environmental Council
Civil War Preservation Trust	The Nature Conservancy
Department of Forestry	Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
Department of Historic Resources	Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries
Assoc. for the Preservation of VA’s Antiquities	

**SB1211 (Senator Hanger) and HB2694 (Delegate Cline) – Expands projects that can be financed by the VA. Resources Authority to include land conservation & preservation.**

- Expands projects that can be financed through the Virginia Resources Authority to include programs or projects for land conservation or land preservation.
- The Virginia Resources Authority's (VRA) is holding Community Investment Workshops to highlight all of their investment assistance programs including for land conservation. The first Workshop was held in Farmville on May 16 and the second workshop is in Hampton on June 19. The workshops draw local elected and appointed officials as well as local government practitioners.
- VRA's ability to provide financing for land conservation and preservation projects will be effective on July 1. VRA has already spoken to several localities about their interest and efforts in supporting conservation and preservation activities. Such interests include among others farm and forestland preservation, open-space, and development rights. In Hampton and in other areas in Tidewater the subject of encroachment has been of particular interest.

**SJ401 (Senator Hanger) and HJ693 (Delegate Cline) [Incorporated SJ396 (Senator Ticer)] - Continues the joint subcommittee studying long-term funding for the purchase of development rights to preserve open-space and farmlands; amended to include strategies related to Northern Virginia.**

- There were 3 bills that related to studying land conservation. They were incorporated together in the final legislation that will continue for an additional year the joint subcommittee studying long-term funding sources for the purchase of development rights to preserve open-space land and farmlands.
- In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall review:
  - recent funding for the preservation of open-space and other conservation land;
  - the future needs of the Commonwealth for open-space and other conservation land, including but not limited to: working farms and forests, wildlife habitat and gamelands, natural areas, parks, and historic resources;
  - the mix of programs best suited to meet such needs, including but not limited to Purchase of Development Rights programs;
  - the cost of such needs; and
  - long-term funding to pay the costs.
- The joint subcommittee shall also develop a plan for the sharing of the costs of land preservation among the Commonwealth and its local governments.
- Further, the joint subcommittee shall identify strategies for increasing land preservation, water supply protection and the availability of large parks to serve Northern Virginia. This item incorporates SJ396 (Ticer) concepts into the study. DCR worked with Senator Ticer and Bill Dickinson to accomplish this study component for NoVA.

### VLCF 2006 Annual Report

A copy of the 2006 VLCF Annual Report is included in your Board packets.

Highlights of the report are as follows:

- The Foundation grant rounds have helped conserve 20,500 acres and nearly 14,000 additional acres have been protected with Foundation funds that were transferred to the VOF. Combined, VLCF funds have contributed to the conservation of over 34,000 acres. (VLCF funds were also committed by VOF to an additional 13,000 acres at the time of publication.)
- VLCF has held four grant rounds (12/99, 01/01, 06/05, 12/05); today is the 5<sup>th</sup> grant round (Nov. 15, 2006 through Jan. 16, 2007 was the application period).
- Over \$57.5 million has been requested for 136 projects through the first four grant rounds. VLCF has been able to award \$21.7 million in grants to 69 projects. (The amount of requests exceeds the amount available for grants by nearly 3 times.)
- In addition, today's grant round includes 31 projects requesting \$24.5 million. The VLCF Board has about \$6 M (or one-fourth of the requested funds) to award.
- Four of the 69 projects have been withdrawn to date; the recaptured funds were subsequently awarded.

### Land Conserved Statewide

- As of June 30, 2006 – 3,445,455 acres have been conserved statewide. This represents 13.6% of Virginia.
- As of June 30, 2006 – 2,457,926 acres have been conserved in the Virginia portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This represents 17.8% of the Bay Watershed.
- As of April 30, 2007, – 154,425 acres have been conserved towards the Governor's goal of conserving 400,000 additional acres by 2010.

### Project Map

- The geographic distribution of VLCF grant projects across the Commonwealth is depicted in the map that has been enclosed in your packets.
- It is important to review the statutory requirement (§10.1-1021.1) related to the geographic distribution of land protected.
- State law calls for "(t)he Foundation to seek to achieve a fair distribution of land protected throughout the Commonwealth, based upon the following:
  1. The importance of conserving land in all regions of the Commonwealth;
  2. The importance of protecting specific properties that can benefit all Virginia citizens;
  3. The importance of addressing the particular land conservation needs of areas of the state where Fund moneys are generated."
- Projects are noticeably lacking in the lower Shenandoah Valley and southern Virginia.
- Projects are largely in the urban crescent where the general fund revenue is generated.
- VLCF is not required to distribute grants by congressional district, although we have reported the information in that manner.

### Brochures

Two new brochures produced by DCR and VOF have been included in your packets:

- 1) A brochure that briefly covers land conservation essentials and options.
  - Why should you protect your land?
    - Tax benefits
  - How can you protect land?
    - Conservation easements
    - Who accepts conservation easements
    - Natural Area dedications
    - Fee simple donations, bargain sales and life estates
- 2) A brochure about the variety of tax benefits for land conservation in Virginia.
  - Virginia state taxable income exclusion
  - Estate and gift tax benefits
  - Bargain sale
  - Local tax benefits
  - Section 1031 exchanges
  - Charitable deductions
  - Virginia income tax credits

### 2006 VLCF Board Activities

- In 2006, the Board met three times:
  - June 7 – grant manual and scoring criteria review and call for 30-day comment period; announcement of the Governor’s goal
  - August 9 – grant manual and scoring criteria approval; tax credit project timeline and process approval; approval of Nov. 15 through Jan. 16 grant round
  - November 30 – tax credit valuation criteria approval
- There were also two subcommittee meetings on the Land Preservation Tax Credit criteria chaired by Brian Ball
  - September 8 and October 3
- On behalf of VLCF, DCR held series of four tax credit public meetings and a 30-day public comment period.